



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
MINUTES – DECEMBER 10, 2009
Human Resources Training Room
575 Administration Drive, Suite 117C, Santa Rosa CA 95403

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Liz Acosta, Chris Allen, Mary Basham, Christina Brenner (Vice Chair), Jan DeWald, Karen Famini, Donna Roper (Officer at Large)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Jan Kiely (Chair) notified, Lisa Maldonado, Priscilla Vivio, notified

JUNIOR COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mia Szarvas, Cynthia Hinde

STAFF PRESENT: Stephanie Wallace

GUESTS PRESENT: Melissa Barnett, Alicia Kae Herries

I. CALL TO ORDER – INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS AND GUESTS:

Brenner called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM. The group welcomed the guests.

II. CONSENT ITEMS:

Acosta motioned to approve the December 10, 2009 Agenda and the November 12, 2009 Draft Commission Minutes, Roper seconded.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Melissa Barnett introduced herself and spoke about her personal experience with the Family Court system which often awards custody to well documented abusive parents in the attempt to keep families unified. Barnett wishes to forward information via email to the Commission on the Status of Women so that this issue can be investigated and addressed within our community. Roper will accept some documents on behalf of the Commission. Jaillet will be the point person for email correspondence from Barnett.

IV. APPOINTMENTS AND OPENINGS:

Brenner announced that the current vacancies are: none in the 1st District, two in the 2nd, one in the 3rd, one in the 4th, and one in the 5th, totaling five openings. Alicia Kae Herries wishes to apply for appointment to the Commission.



V. SUPERVISOR COMMUNICATION UPDATES:

Roper asked Basham to report about discussion with Supervisor Zane regarding her desire to have the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights moved to the District Attorney's Office for oversight. Acosta mentioned that Kiely first heard of this news at the last Board of Supervisors meeting. To date, neither Commission has been included in the discussions regarding this possible change. It was said that Commissioners should have been advised in advance of such a public announcement.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

Teen Pregnancies and Drop out Rate:

Acosta researched the existing provisions for at risk teens in Sonoma County and contacted Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) for information. There are many existing programs which aim at prevention and intervention in support of teen parents and teens at risk for failing to graduate from high school. Further, the Latino male population group is disproportionately at risk for not graduating. Roper proposed that she would talk with Kiely and get clarification about the Commission's involvement on this issue.

WIN Fund:

The Santa Rosa Junior College Endowment application has been submitted. Jaillet will email former Commissioners to raise awareness and solicit donations for this scholarship opportunity. Famini will contact the Junior Commissioner group. Roper added that \$1,006.32 still needs to be raised.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

Increasing Commission Visibility:

Brenner opened discussion with her belief that the key to greater Commission visibility will be accomplished through educating the community of the Commission's value. Roper mentioned the PowerPoint presentation that has been used in the past, and she encouraged greater outreach to Rotarian and Soroptimist groups and possibly local Democratic and Republican Central Committees. Roper suggested that the Commission commit to giving one presentation per County District per year.

Famini stated that a Press Democrat reporter was planning to publish a 250 word article about the Commission on the Status of Women. Brenner suggested that the Commission aim for a greater publicity outreach to include at least three Sonoma County newspapers. Other ideas included:

- Publish a monthly "Meet Your Commissioner" article with updates on the work of the Commission (Basham)
- Publish a monthly "Calendar of Events" (Basham)
- Review PowerPoint and talking points (Roper)
- Draft a generic newspaper article and give presentations (Basham)
- Submit "Community Calendar" events to newspaper outlets (Basham)

- Create “Speaker Packets” including PowerPoint handouts, Executive Summaries, Commissioner applications, etc. (Brenner suggested Jaillet as the point person for this task.)
- Research history of Press Releases concerning the Commission (Acosta)

National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) Membership:

No report.

VIII. ACTIVITY REPORTS:

Junior Commission:

Famini introduced Szarvas, 5th District Junior Commissioner. Szarvas announced the Focus Group topics currently being addressed:

- Sexual Objectification
- Sex Education; Teen Pregnancy
- Teen Pregnancy Support Services
- Abortion and Insurance Coverage
- Perception of Female Image (Acceptability)
- Domestic Violence
- Success and Satisfaction in Women
- Abstinence
- Housing Insecurity
- Perception of Appearances
- Femininity and Expectation
- Affects of Pop Culture on Tweens

Women’s History Month:

Basham will finalize presentation locations. Szarvas suggested Analy High School. Brenner suggested the Rohnert Park Public Library. DeWald suggested Friends House Conference Room in Santa Rosa. Finley Community Center was suggested.

Community Issues Liaison & Coordinators:

- ◇ **ACCW (Association of California Commissions on Women) Liaison (Acosta):**
No report this month.
- ◇ **AAA (Area Agency on Aging) Liaison (Kiely):**
No report this month.
- ◇ **Career Technical Education and Non-Traditional Career Liaison (Brenner):**
Brenner emailed the Administrator to advise that she has accepted full-time employment and cannot commit to program development at this time.
- ◇ **Domestic Violence Liaison (Roper):**
Roper advised that Christine Cook has not responded yet.
- ◇ **Human Trafficking Liaison (Brenner):**
The last meeting was canceled and the group may not meet before the end of the year. Two Ursuline seniors are producing a peer-level presentation as

their Senior Project and plan to coordinate educational outreach with the Human Trafficking Task Force.

◇ **Juvenile Justice Liaison (Maldonado):**

No report this month.

◇ **Legislation Coordinator (Vivio):**

No report this month.

◇ **Representation Coordinator (Roper):**

No report this month. Acosta announced that she is meeting with Coalition for Latino Civic Engagement (CLACE) for possible partnership.

IX. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Attendance Report Distribution:

The attendance report was distributed.

Budget Report Distribution:

The budget report was distributed.

Correspondence:

The mailbag was electronically distributed earlier.

X. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT COMMISSION MEETING:

- Publicity outreach follow-up including Commission PowerPoint and talking points – Roper
- Letter to the Editor responses follow-up – Basham
- Career Technical Education & Non-Traditional Career follow-up with SCOE – Brenner
- Engage Commission about its possible move to the District Attorney's Office – Kiely
- Report on Commissioners' Discussions with their District Supervisors – All
- DeWald becoming Domestic Violence Prevention Liaison – Roper
- Follow-up on family court issue – All

XI. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Famini announced that the January 5, 2010 Junior Commissioner meeting will include a Career Panel.

XII. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on Thursday, January 14, 2010 at 6:00 PM.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Brenner adjourned the meeting at 7:26 PM.